



TESTIMONY FOR HB0631

Eminent Domain – Agricultural and Conservation Easements – Prohibited Taking

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Guyton

Committee: Economic Matters

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0631 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members respect the need of the state to occasionally take private property for public use. At this juncture, the need for power to support data center expansion is causing local jurisdictions to look at seizing private property on a perpetual agricultural or conservation easement. This is because data centers need huge tracts of land and are particularly interested in rural land.

This bill would protect those properties by making them exempt from the eminent domain statute. We must protect our agricultural lands and ensure that we are being good stewards.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.